

United States
Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

Miles City Field Office

Firewood Harvest

Categorical Exclusion (CX)
DOI-BLM-MT-C020-2013-0071-CX

For Further Information Please Contact:

Bureau of Land Management
Miles City Field Office
111 Garryowen Road
Miles City, Montana 59301
406-233-2800

BLM



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Miles City Field Office
111 Garryowen Road
Miles City, Montana 59301

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION REVIEW AND APPROVAL

A. Background

BLM Office: Miles City Field Office

NEPA Number: DOI-BLM-MT-C020-2013-0071-CX

- Proposed Action Title/Type: Firewood Harvest including: Dispersed Personal Use and Prescriptive Use
- Description of Proposed Action: Based on public demand, BLM Miles City Field Office would issue authorizations for non-commercial (personal use) harvest of firewood on public lands in the Miles City Field Office (Except those special management areas shown on Map A). The authorizations could be issued for a minimum of 2 cords and a maximum of 10 cords. Should monitoring indicate that an area open for fuelwood harvesting is being impacted (off-road travel, standing green trees being cut, etc.) the area would be closed to fuelwood cutting until the Field Office Manager decides to re-open the area for use again.
- Location of Proposed Action:
 - Dispersed Personal Use: public lands in the Miles City Field Office (Except those special management areas shown on Map A)
 - Prescriptive Use: High use recreation areas including: Dean S, Matthews, Howery Island and Morehead

Stipulations:

Dispersed Use Authorizations would include the following standard stipulations:

1. No live trees, or branches from live trees will be taken. Live trees are trees that have any evidence of green leaves or needles.
2. A copy of this authorization must be displayed in plain view while in the permit area (typically displayed on the vehicle dashboard).
3. This authorization is issued only for the area specified.
4. Harvest may occur only during the dates issued on the permit, or until expiration date indicated on the permit.
5. Loaded material must be less than 8 feet in length.
6. Motorized vehicular travel is limited to well-established existing roads. No off-road motorized vehicular travel is allowed under this authorization.
7. No motorized travel is allowed under this authorization when conditions are wet or muddy to the extent that road damage occurs.
8. No standing dead trees with diameters larger than 8" measured at breast height (The diameter of the tree measured at 4.5 ft. above where the tree meets the ground) may be cut, nor limbs taken from standing dead trees of this size.

9. Trees that have evidence of wildlife use, roosting, nesting cavities, etc., will not be cut.
10. No firewood cutting or log skidding is authorized within 100 feet of any stream, river, pond, reservoir, or wetland.
11. The holder of this authorization will abide by all area fire restrictions.
12. If historic properties or artifacts are discovered, avoid any disturbance within the area and notify the Miles City Field Office.

Prescriptive Use Authorizations would be issued for Dean S, Matthews, Howerly Island and Morehead as needed for meeting management objectives for those specific recreation use areas. Public would be notified when permits are available for these areas. Site specific stipulations would be identified on the authorizations.

B. Land Use Plan Conformance

Land Use Plan Names:

Big Dry RMP, Date Approved/Amended: February 1995/April 2000

Powder River RMP, Date Approved/Amended: December 1984.

The proposed action is in conformance with the above LUPs because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decisions: On an incidental basis forestry products are harvested. Uses are normally for posts, poles, Christmas trees and firewood. Harvesting of firewood is allowed on designated public lands for dead trees, with ponderosa pine being the primary species.

The Healthy Lands Initiative (2007) supports the proposed action through a proactive approach of removing dead tree debris within grazing allotments encouraging nutrient cycling and land health.

C: Compliance with NEPA:

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 11.9 © (5) which states *“Disposal of small amounts of miscellaneous vegetation products outside established harvest areas, such as Christmas trees, wildlings, floral products (ferns, boughs, etc.), cones, seeds, and personal use firewood”*.

This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed, and, as documented below, none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM2 apply.

Extraordinary Circumstances		
The project would:		
1. Have significant impacts on public health or safety.		
Yes	No	Rationale: Standard stipulations have been included in the proposed

	X BSW 1/3/13	action to avoid significant impact to human health and safety (primarily fire). Other than fire danger the proposed action would not have significant effects on public health or safety.
2. Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.		
Yes	No X BSW 1/3/13	Rationale: Sensitive areas, including but not limited to those listed above, have been excluded from Map A. There would not be any personal use firewood authorizations issued in the exempt areas where shown on Map A.
3. Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA section 102 (2) (E)].		
Yes	No X BSW 1/3/13	Rationale: The impacts of the proposed action are well-known and demonstrated in other projects.
4. Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		
Yes	No BSW 1/3/13 X	Rationale: Dispersed firewood harvest activities generally have very predictable consequences and are well as established as insignificant.
5. Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principal about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		
Yes	No X BSW 1/3/13	Rationale: There are no known connected actions or other actions that would require further environmental analysis or set a precedent for future actions that would normally require environmental analysis.
6. Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.		
Yes	No X BSW 1/3/13	Rationale: The proposed action does not have a direct relationship to any other known action with individually insignificant but cumulative significant environmental effects.

7. Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.		
Yes	No <i>CJ</i> <i>01/30/2013</i> <i>MT-020-</i> <i>13-98</i> X	Rationale: There would be no significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as a result of implementation of this project.
8. Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species, or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.		
Yes	No X KU 2/1/13	Rationale: There are no known listed or proposed to be listed T&E species that would be affected by this project. Threatened and/or endangered species habitat does not exist in the proposed wood cutting areas.
9. Violate a Federal law, or a State, local or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		
Yes	No X BSW 1/3/13	Rationale: Standard stipulations have been incorporated into the proposed action to ensure conformance with applicable laws and requirements.
10. Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).		
Yes	No BSW 1/3/13 X	Rationale: Such populations are not known to be present or if present will not be subject to disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects.
11. Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).		
Yes	No <i>CJ</i> <i>01/30/2013</i> <i>MT-020-</i> <i>13-98</i> X	Rationale: Any known sacred sites have been excluded from the areas where harvest would be permitted Map A).
12. Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the		

introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).		
Yes	No	Rationale: Areas with known significant infestations of noxious weeds have been excluded from harvest on Map A. In addition, the standard stipulation " <i>Motorized vehicular travel is limited to well-established existing roads. No off-road motorized vehicular travel is allowed under this authorization</i> " would also minimize the potential for dispersal of noxious weed seeds.
	X BSW 1/3/13	


 Environmental Coordinator

5/30/2013
 Date

I considered the proposed action and the above extraordinary circumstances and have determined there is no potential for significant impacts. Use of this CX is appropriate and I have decided to implement this action.

D: Signature

Authorizing Official: Dale Tribby for
 Name: Todd D. Yeager
 Title: Field Manager

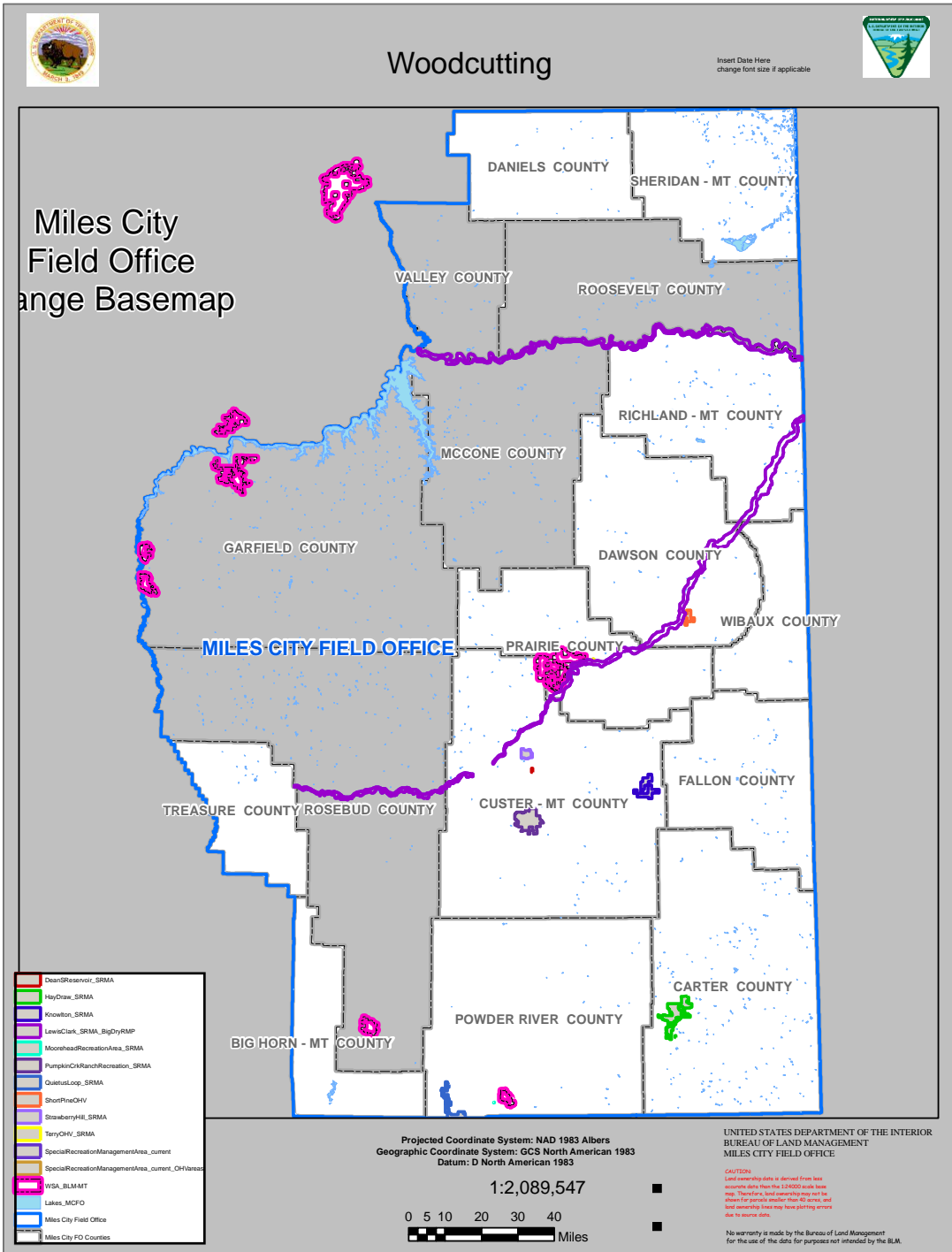
Date: 5/31/2013

Administrative Review or Appeal Opportunities

This decision is not subject to administrative appeal

Contact Person

Brenda Witkowski
 Weed Specialist
 Miles City BLM Field Office
 111 Garryowen Road, Miles City, MT 59301 (406) 233-2823.



Decision
DOI-BLM-MT-C020-2013-0071-CX

Decision and Rationale on Action

I have decided to implement the proposed action of DOI-BLM-MT-C020-2013-0071-CX as described below.

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In addition, I have reviewed the plan conformance statement and have determined that the proposed action is in conformance with the approved land use plan and that no further environmental analysis is required under the National Environmental Policy Act (as documented in the attached CX, NEPA Compliance [Section C]).

Implementation Date

This project will be implemented on or after [6/3/2013].

Signature

Todd D. Yeager
Field Manager

Date

Administrative Review or Appeal Opportunities

This decision is not subject to administrative appeal.

Contact Person

For additional information concerning this decision, contact:

Brenda Witkowski

Weed Specialist

Miles City BLM Field Office

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